THAT FELL DOWN ON THE VILLAGE

THE EXPERIENCE OF LIGHT SNOW .....

初

HAJIME

〈前編(ぜんぺん)〉

*HOLDING ON TO THE ADVENTUROUS SPIRIT OF YOUTH.....AN UNBELIEVABLE TWO-PART STORY

WRITER: OTSU ICHI
ARTIST: OBATA TAKESHI
TRANSLATOR: PHILLY EDITOR: D6Y22

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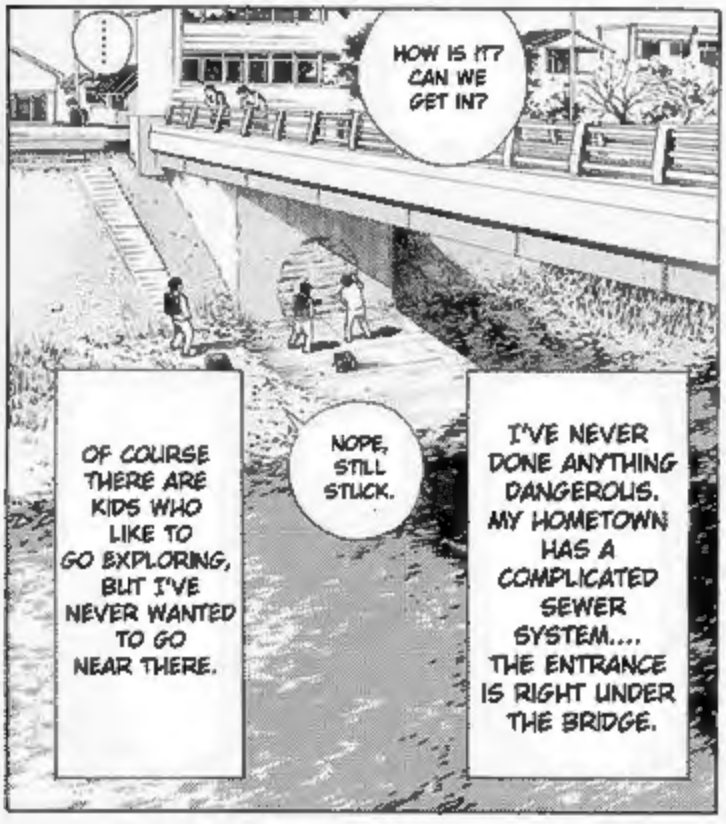
I SAY ODD BECAUSE I LIKE THINGS NO ONE ELSE CARES ABOUT.
MY NAME IS KAN KOUHEI. I'M AN ODD KID.
Winter Sixth Grade

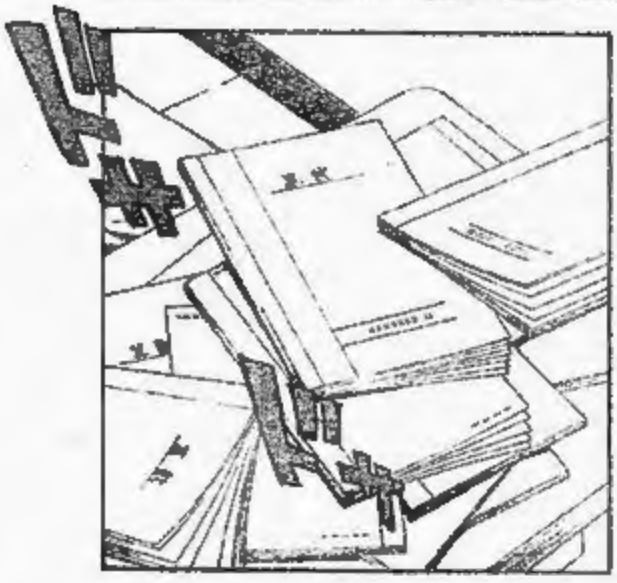

HOW IS IT? CAN WE GET IN?
NOPE, STILL STUCK.
OF COURSE THERE ARE KIDS WHO LIKE TO GO EXPLORING, BUT I'VE NEVER WANTED TO GO NEAR THERE.
I'VE NEVER DONE ANYTHING DANGEROUS. MY HOMETOWN HAS A COMPLICATED SEWER SYSTEM.... THE ENTRANCE IS RIGHT UNDER THE BRIDGE.

I LIKE TO SIT NEAR WINDOWS; WHEN I GET MY PICTURE TAKEN, AND WHEN I'M WALKING, I LIKE TO STAY ON THE SIDE, AND AVOID THE MIDDLE OF THE ROAD.

BUT I HAD AN UNBELIEVABLE EXPERIENCE DUE TO SOMETHING THAT HAPPENED.

OOPS, THE LOCK BROKE.
HAHA!
SO I THOUGHT I'D NEVER EXPERIENCE ADVENTURE AND HORROR.

THE FIRST TIME WAS WHEN I WAS IN THE SIXTH GRADE.

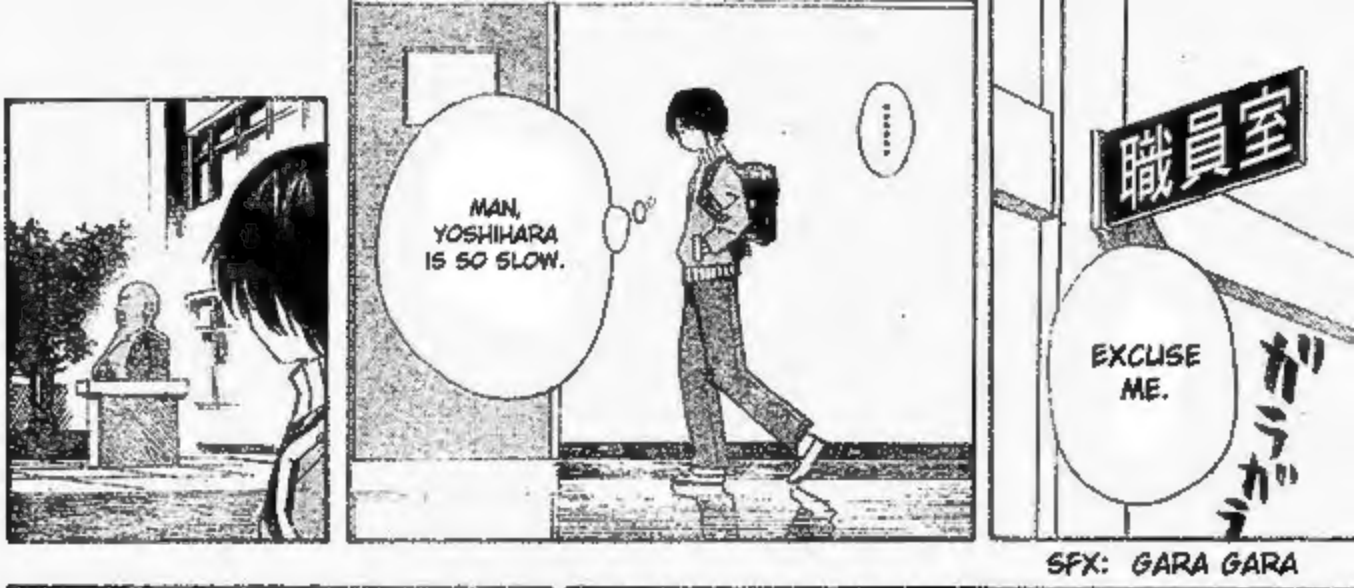


OK, WOULD THE HELPER OF THE DAY, KOUHEI,
PLEASE TAKE THE COMPLETED ASSIGNMENTS TO THE OFFICE.

HURRY UP.
.....
SO THAT'S 'A' : SALT WATER

HEY KOUHEI, HE'S STILL COPYING IT, GIVE US A SECOND WILL YOU?

LET'S GET OUTTA HERE.
OKAY, WE'RE DONE.



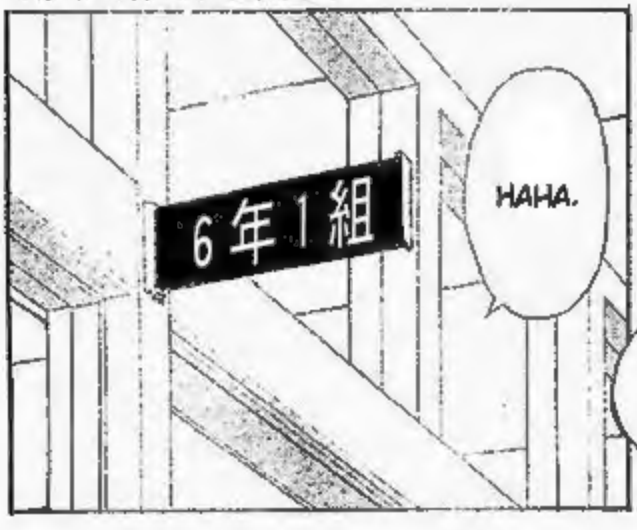
SFX: GARA GARA

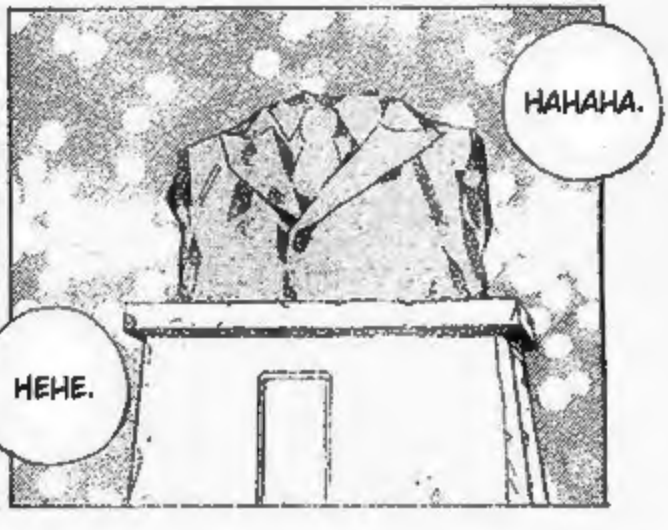
SO SOME KIDS LIKE TO DRAW GRAFFITI AND CHIP PIECES OFF OF THE STATUE OF OUR PRINCIPAL.
EVERYONE HATES THE PRINCIPAL HERE BECAUSE HE TALKS TOO MUCH, SOMETIMES DURING THE MORNING ASSEMBLIES STUDENTS GET SO TIRED THEY FALL DOWN.

SF: DOOOOH

WHAAAAAAAA!?
MAN THAT FELT GOOD!
I DIDN'T WANNA BREAK IT.
IT WAS JUST A BAD COINCIDENCE.
IT WAS PROBABLY BECAUSE SO MANY STUDENTS HAVE ABUSED IT, AND THAT KICK WAS THE LIMIT.
I GUESS I'LL JUST MAKE A BREAK FOR IT.
WHAT SHOULD I DO ?!
WHAT SHOULD I DO ?!
WHO'S THERE?
.....
.....
!

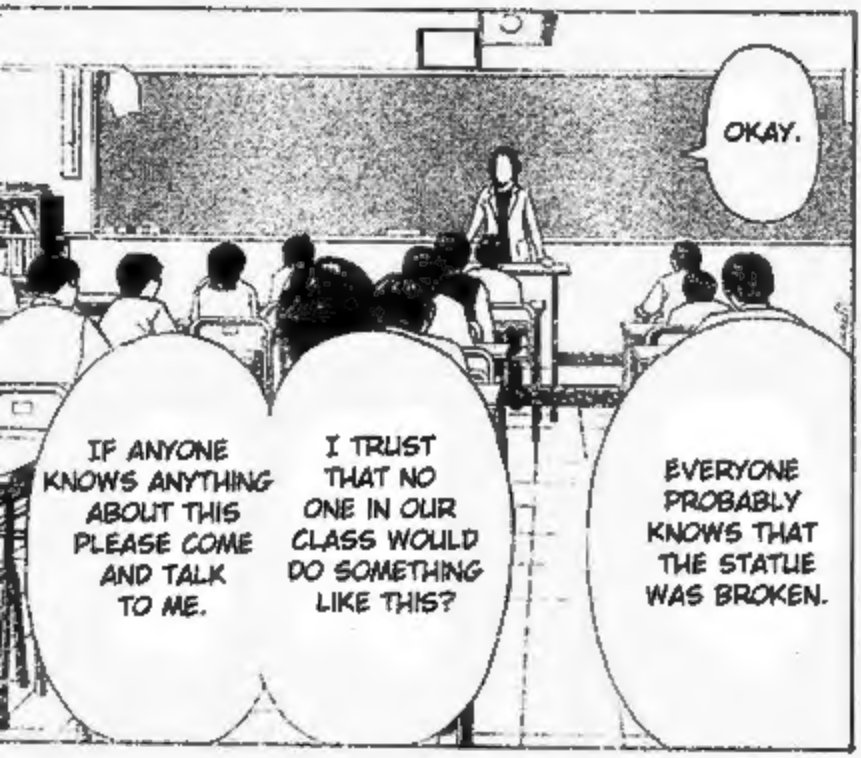
SIGN: YEAR 6 CLASS 1





REALLY? DOES THE GUY HAVE TO PAY FOR IT?
BUT..... THAT STATUE PROBABLY COSTS A FEW MILLION YEN.
NO ONE COULD BREAK IT.
I DON'T KNOW WHO DID IT, BUT I GOTTA HAND IT TO HIM.
DID YOU GUYS SEE THE PRINCIPAL'S STATUE?

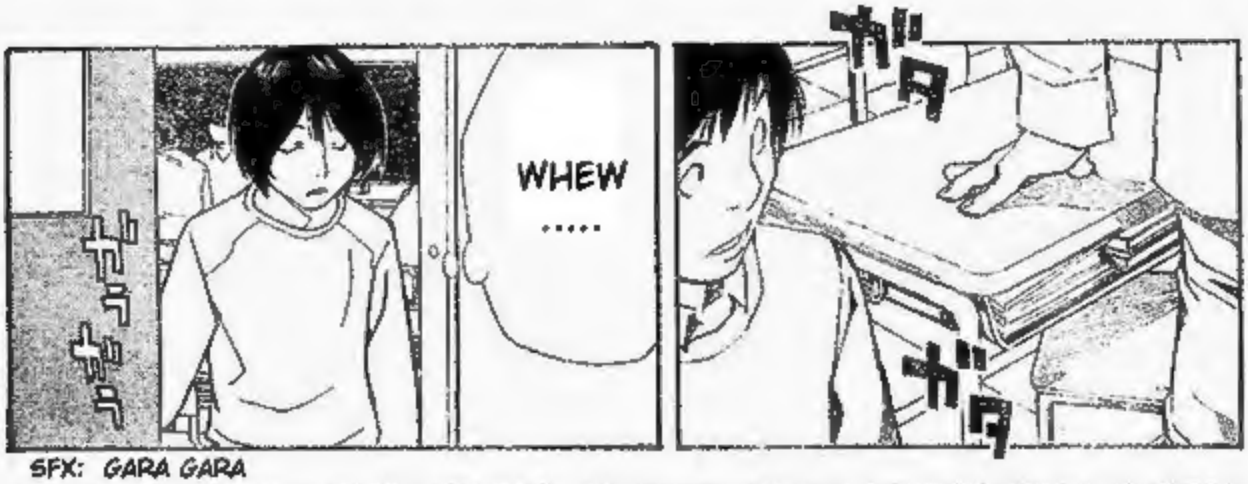
SFX: GARA GARA (DOOR SLIDING)


OKAY.
IF ANYONE KNOWS ANYTHING ABOUT THIS PLEASE COME AND TALK TO ME.
I TRUST THAT NO ONE IN OUR CLASS WOULD DO SOMETHING LIKE THIS?
EVERYONE PROBABLY KNOWS THAT THE STATUE WAS BROKEN.

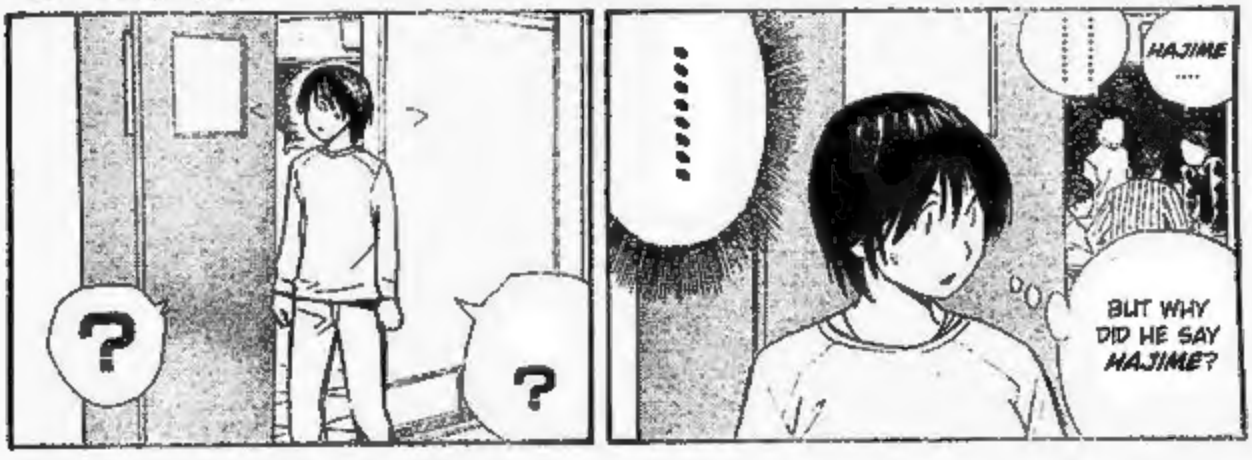
SFX: GADA

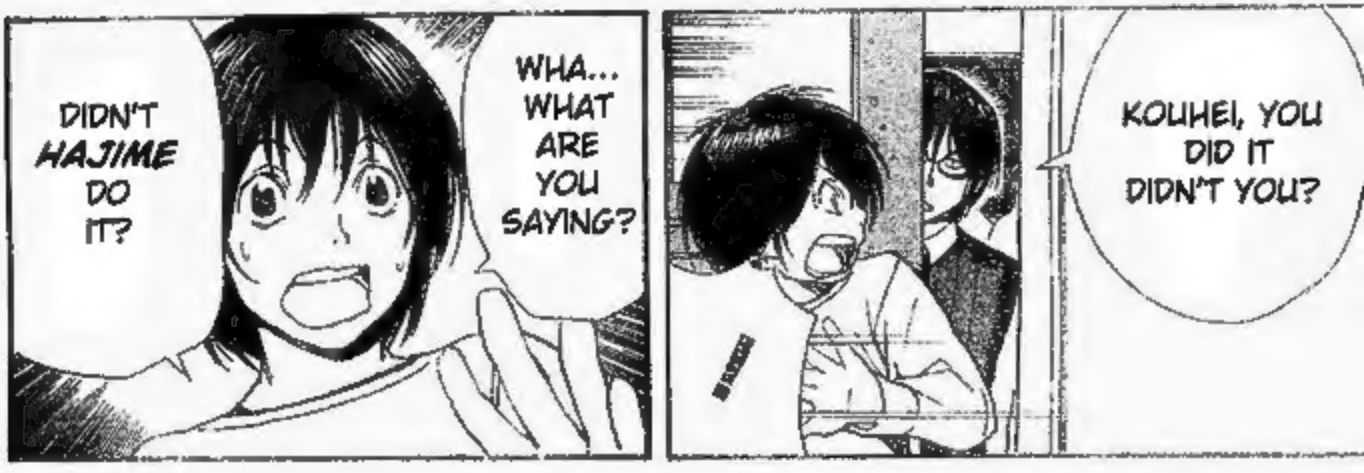
KIZUNO ATSUO IS PART OF THE STUDENT COUNCIL. HE'S A STUDENT WHO GETS A PERFECT MARK ON EVERY TEST.
DURING THE STUDENT COUNCIL MEETINGS HE EVEN TALKS LIKE A JUDGE AND SAYS THINGS LIKE "WHOEVER DIDN'T CLEAN UP AND DO HIS DUTIES, HE'S BLAH BLAH BLAH....
THE CULPRIT IS....
NO...NO... DAMN IT.
A GIRL NAMED HAJIME.
HAJIME....

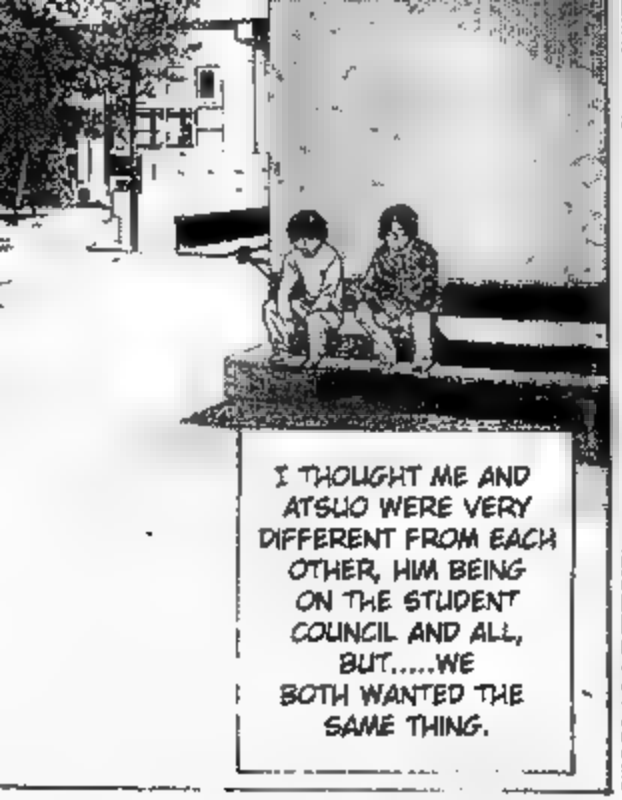
DO YOU KNOW WHICH CLASS SHE'S IN?
A GIRL NAMED HAJIME .....
WHAT?
HAJIME?
I DON'T THINK SHE'S ATTENDING THIS SCHOOL.
I JUST SAW HER NEAR OUR SCHOOL.
?
?
?
BLACK SHORT BOOTS, EVERYTHING SHE WEARS IS BLACK.
SHORT HAIR, BLACK LEATHER JACKET,
HAJIME?
NEVER HEARD OF HER .....
A GIRL?
SFX: WHISPERING
A GIRL!
THEY SAY IT'S A GIRL!



SFX: GARA GARA



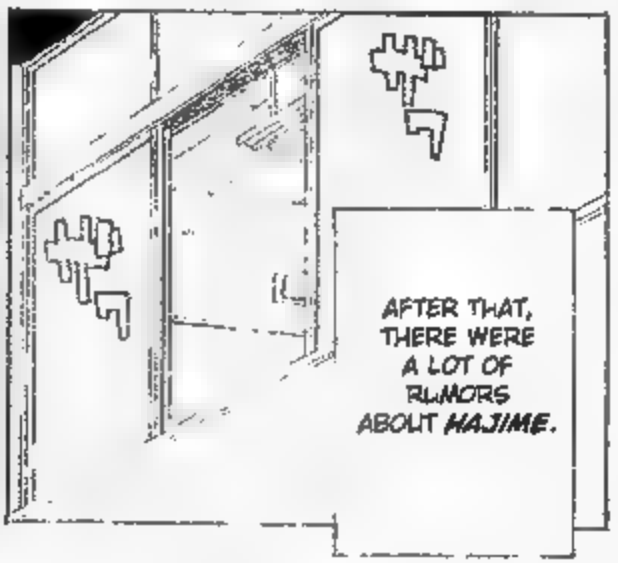



I THOUGHT ME AND ATSUO WERE VERY DIFFERENT FROM EACH OTHER, HIM BEING ON THE STUDENT COUNCIL AND ALL, BUT.....WE BOTH WANTED THE SAME THING.

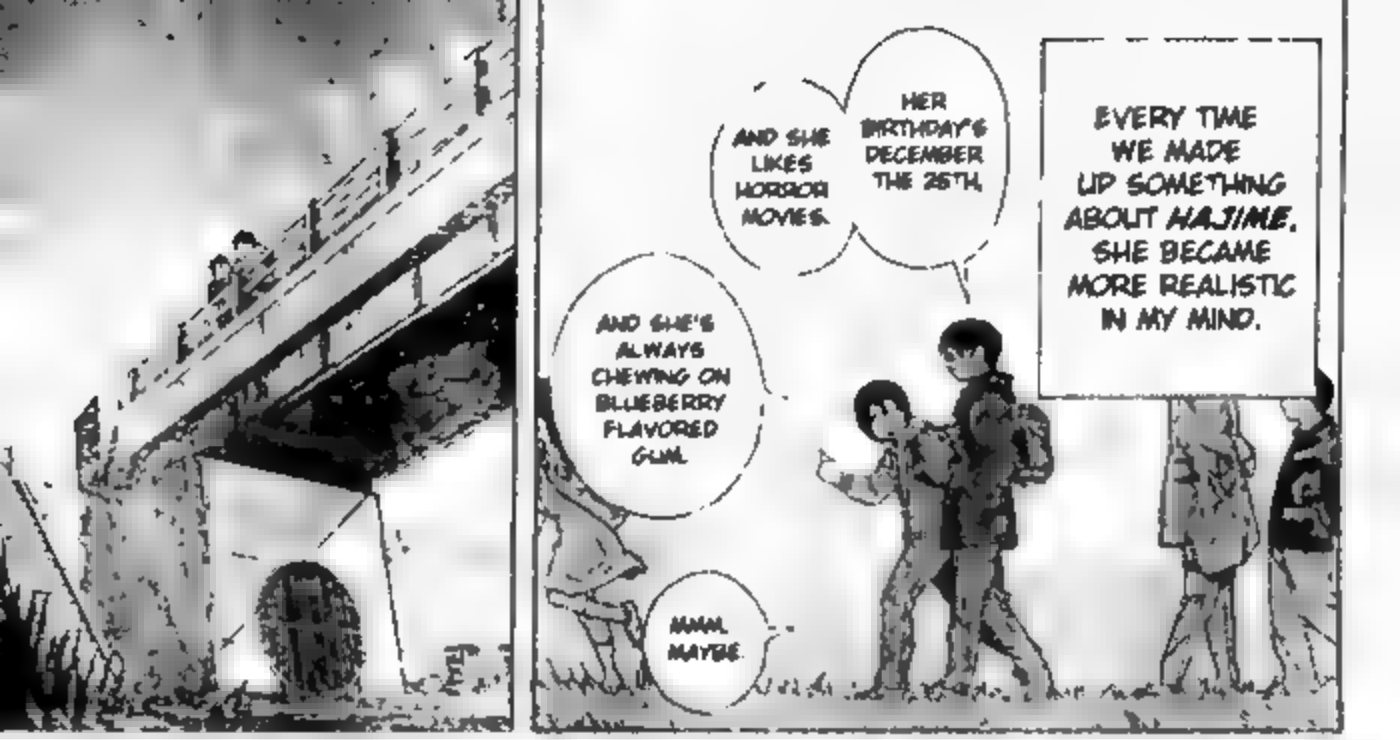
YOU AND ME SHARE THE SAME THOUGHTS.

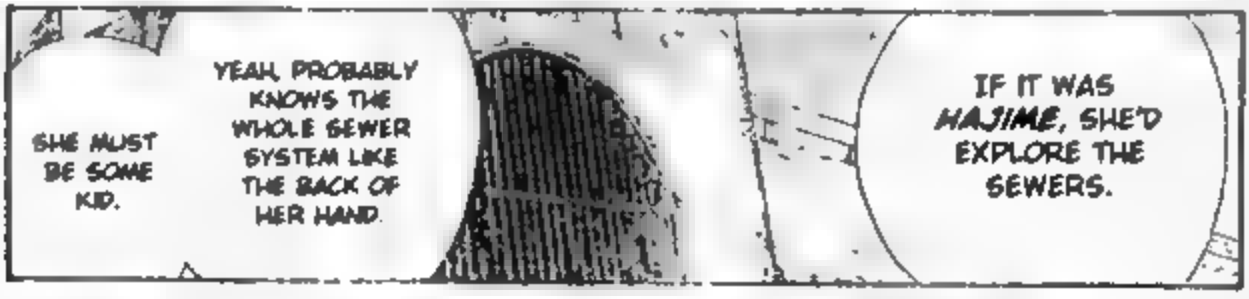
I'VE NEVER BEEN SO THANKFUL IN MY LIFE, AND AFTER I FOUND OUT ATSUO WANTED TO DO THE SAME THING AS ME, I WAS REALLY HAPPY.
SO HE MADE UP A GIRL NAMED *HAJIME* TO SAVE MY ASS.
IF I WAS THERE AND I DID IT, I'D BE THE ONE IN TROUBLE.
WHEN HE WAS COMING BACK FROM TUTORIALS, HE SAW ME BY CHANCE.

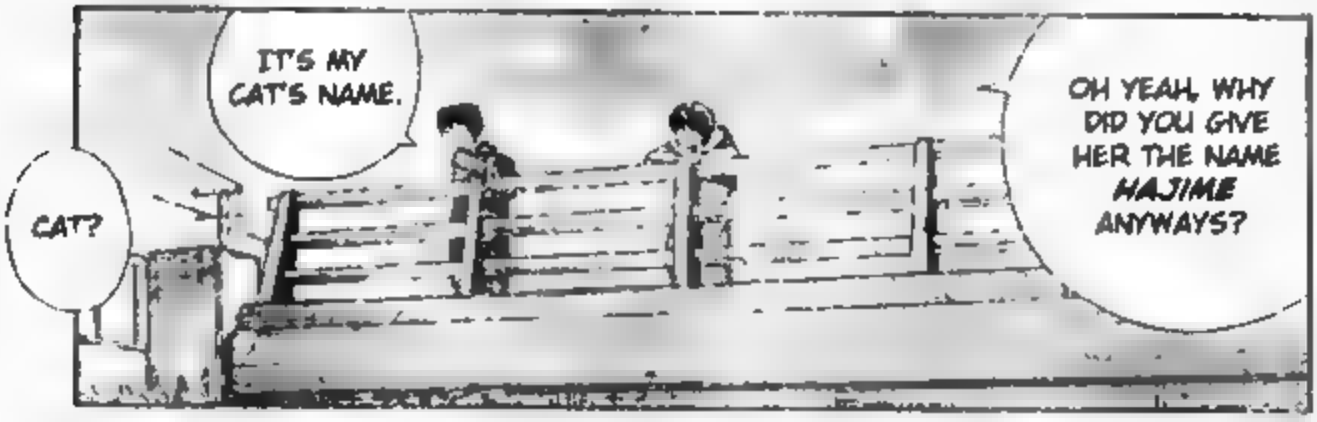
THEN THE STORY TURNED OUT THAT SHE'S A MONKEY-LOOKING POWERPUFFED GIRL.
THE ONE WHO BROKE THE STATUE WAS A GIRL WEARING A COOL-LOOKING LEATHER SET

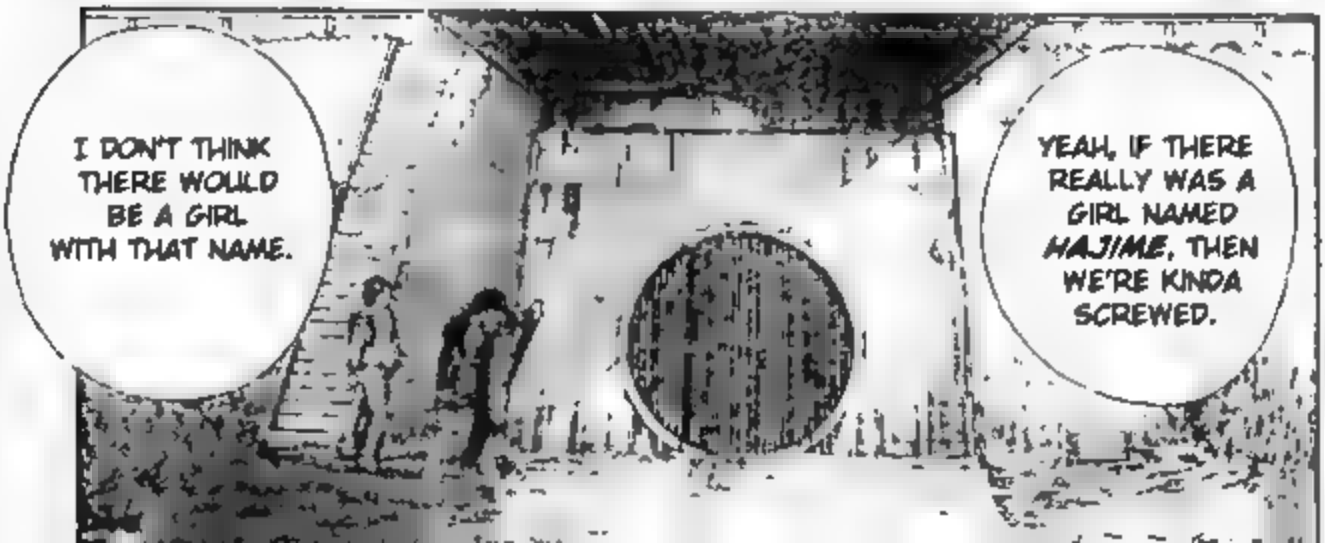

AFTER THAT, THERE WERE A LOT OF RUMORS ABOUT *HAJIME*.

THAT'S HOW THE NAME "HAJIME" STARTED GOING AROUND THE TOWN.
IT OBVIOUSLY WASN'T HAJIME, IT'S PROBABLY JUST KIDS WHO DID SOMETHING BAD LIKE ME USING THE NAME.
THEN HAJIME DID MORE AND MORE BAD THINGS.
I HEARD HAJIME BROKE THE WINDOW IN THE MUSIC ROOM.
AND BEFORE SHE DREW GRAFFITI ON CARS,
AND TOLD OTHER KIDS TO GO SHOPLIFTING.
EVERY TIME A STORY ABOUT HAJIME CAME UP, ATSUO AND I WOULD TALK ABOUT HER.
IT SEEMS LIKE HAJIME'S A DARK CHARACTER.
MAYBE SHE GREW UP IN A BAD ENVIRONMENT, HER PARENTS MUST WORK REALLY HARD.
HMMM ..... REALLY .....
I'M THINKING IT'S A BAD PLACE,
BUT SHE HAS TO TAKE CARE OF HER GRANDMA, SHE MUST BE A SENSITIVE PERSON.
WHATEVER.


EVERY TIME WE MADE UP SOMETHING ABOUT *HAJIME*, SHE BECAME MORE REALISTIC IN MY MIND.
HER BIRTHDAY'S DECEMBER THE 25TH.
AND SHE LIKES HORROR MOVIES.
AND SHE'S ALWAYS CHEWING ON BLUEBERRY FLAVORED GUM.
MMM. MAYBE.


IF IT WAS *HAJIME*, SHE'D EXPLORE THE SEWERS.
YEAH, PROBABLY KNOWS THE WHOLE SEWER SYSTEM LIKE THE BACK OF HER HAND.
SHE MUST BE SOME KID.


OH YEAH, WHY DID YOU GIVE HER THE NAME *HAJIME* ANYWAYS?
IT'S MY CAT'S NAME.
CAT?


YEAH, IF THERE REALLY WAS A GIRL NAMED *HAJIME*, THEN WE'RE KINDA SCREWED.
I DON'T THINK THERE WOULD BE A GIRL WITH THAT NAME.

HMMM..... SHOULD WE TAKE A LOOK?
SFX: GII (DOOR OPENING)
WHAT?
CHECK THIS OUT KOUHEI.
LOOK, THE LOCK'S BROKEN.
SFX GIGIGI
COME ON, LET'S NOT DO THIS.
SFX: CHIKA (CLICK)
SIGGY.
FORGET IT, IF WE'RE SEEN....
WE'LL GET IN TROUBLE.

.....
THAT VOICE .....
HUH!?
YOU REALLY THINK THERE'D BE A CORPSE IN HERE?
You really think there'd be a corpse in here?
SOUNDS LIKE SOMETHING HAJIME WOULD SAY.
LET'S GO CHECK IT OUT.
I DON'T KNOW WHY.
BUT NOW IT'S LIKE WE HAVE TO GO IN THERE, BECAUSE HAJIME WOULD....

SOME PEOPLE EVEN SAID THAT MAYBE THERE'S TREASURE
THIS SEWER SYSTEM WAS MADE TO PREVENT FLOODING DUE TO RAINSTORMS, SO THERE'S A LOT OF STUFF THAT COMES THROUGH HERE.
WHICH WAY?
ANOTHER ROUTE?
.....
ATSUO
I FELT LIKE SOMEONE WAS FOLLOWING US
WHEN WE CAME IN HERE...

!
MAYBE YOU'RE JUST OVER-REACTING.
WHO IS IT??
AHHH HHHH
.....
!

IT'S COMING !!!
SFX: DASH
HURRY, DON'T LET IT CATCH US!!
IT'S CATCHING UP!
COULD THAT HAVE BEEN
HAJIME?
ATSUO WAIT UP!
STOP RUNNING !!
HUH? WHAT?

HER CLOTHES ARE LIKE WHAT WE SAID THEY WOULD BE.
MAYBE SOMEONE DRESSED UP LIKE HER?
BUT .....
HUH!?
GET SERIOUS, HAJIME IS A COMPLETELY FICTITIOUS PERSON!
LET'S GO GET HER!
Acchoi !!
WE CAN'T FORGIVE WHOEVER IT IS.
THAT MUST BE IT.
.....
AH!
!
What are you guys doing there?
ahahaha
WHA... WHAT ?!
WAIT A SEC, HER CAP IS RED....
Hahaha

YEAH....
IT WAS YOU WHO SAW MAJIME RIGHT?
SHE HAD A BLACK LEATHER JACKET AND BLACK LEATHER BOOTS.
BACK THEN .....

BUT ATSUO REALLY LIKED A COMPLETELY BLACK OUTFIT, SO I DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING
AT THAT TIME, I THOUGHT IF SHE HAD A RED BASEBALL CAP ON.....
KOUHEI COMPLETELY BLACK, PRETTY COOL I'D SAY

REALLY, I'VE NEVER HEARD ABOUT THE RED BASEBALL CAP.
SO ONLY I KNOW THAT SHE WEARS A RED BASEBALL CAP!
IF THAT PERSON WANTED TO DRESS UP AS MAJIME THEN.....
WHO IS THAT PERSON .....?

THE REAL HAJIME.
HUH!?
COME ON!
KOUHEI!
HOLD ON.
HAJIME WENT IN THERE.
WHAT 'REAL' HAJIME ..... THERE IS NO HAJIME!
!
KOU...
AHHH !!

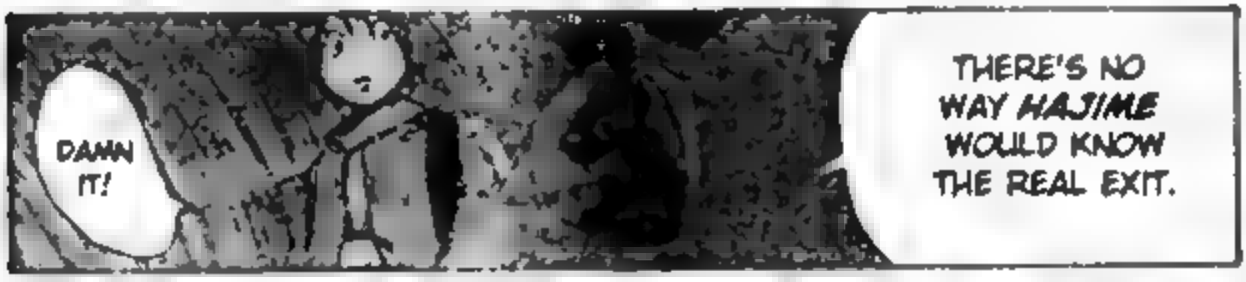
WHOA...
IS THIS THE BOTTOM?
NOTHING'S MOVING.
IT'S LIKE A DEAD LAKE.

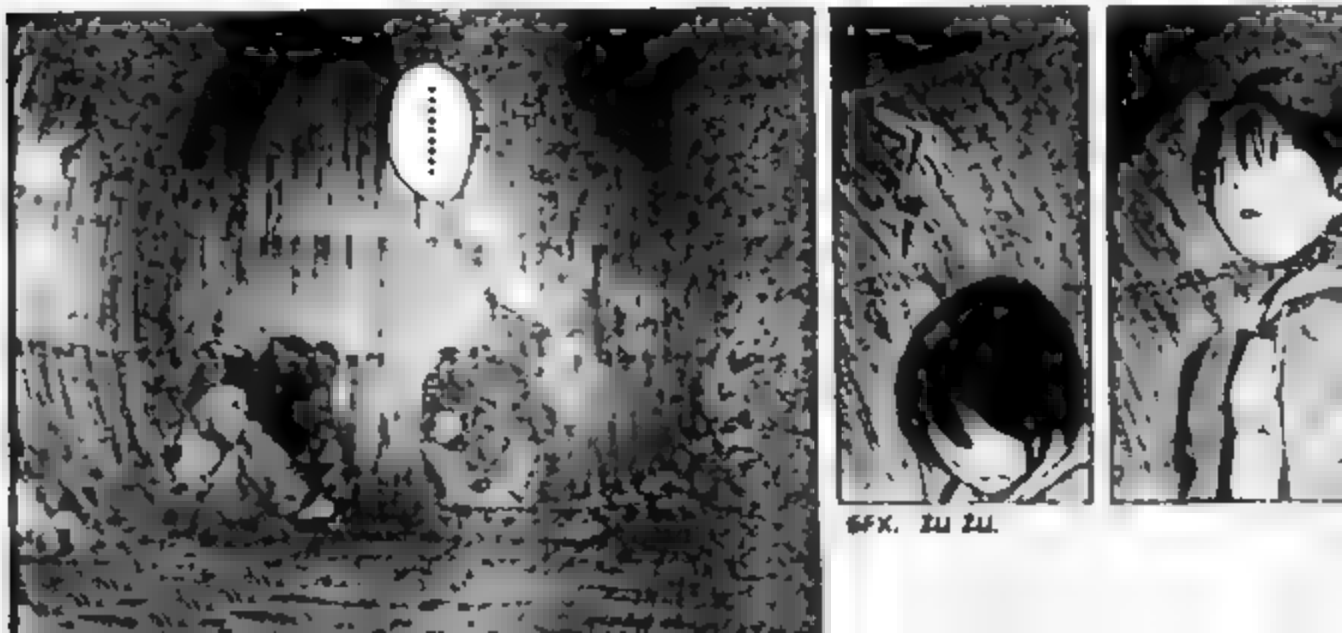
AHH IT'S SO DARK!
DAMN IT! OUT OF BATTERIES.
WHAT HAPPENED ?!
HUH ?
I'M SURE THAT GUY CAME IN HERE.
WHERE IS THAT PERSON?
DON'T SAY THAT YOU IDIOT!
IS THIS WHERE YOU GO AFTER YOU DIE?
HMMM ...
WHY WOULD THIS PLACE HOLD TREASURE
MAYBE I STILL REMEMBER THE PATH.
WHATEVER, LET'S JUST GET OUT FIRST.
NOW WE CAN'T EVEN SEE THE MARKS WE MADE.
THEN STRAIGHT ..... THEN RIGHT.
FIRST, TAKE A LEFT HERE.
ISN'T IT TO THE LEFT KOUHEI?
A RIGHT .....
AND THEN .....
HOO
HOW
HOW

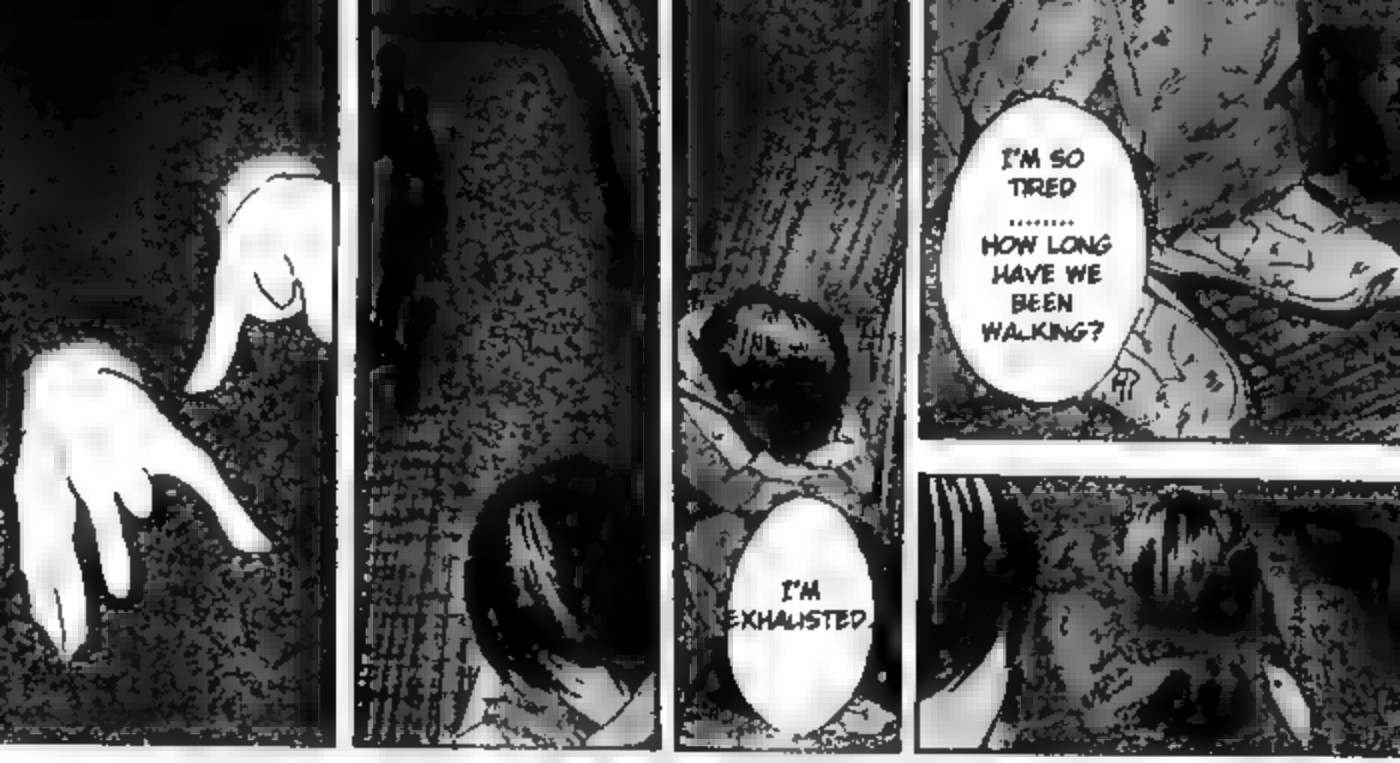
Yeah, come on, over here.
!
NO! IT'S LEFT, I'M SURE.
MAN I'M GETTING DIZZY.
ATSUO, I THINK IT'S TO THE RIGHT.
IT LOOKS LIKE HAJIME IS TELLING US TO GO THAT WAY.
KOUHEI, DON'T GO OVER THERE!
WAIT, ATSUO!
I'M GOING TO THE LEFT!
IT MUST BE A FIGMENT OF YOUR IMAGINATION BECAUSE IT'S DARK AND OUR EYES CAN'T ADJUST.
HAJIME.... THERE IS NO HAJIME!

BUT HAJIME DID SHOW UP AS A MIRAGE IN REALITY"
I KNOW HAJIME ISN'T REAL. MAYBE IT'S JUST A MIRAGE.
COME BACK, ATSUO!
SO SHE SHOULD KNOW THE PATH'S HERE. IF WE FOLLOW HER, WE CAN GET OUT!
THE HAJIME WE SAW IS THE ONE THAT WE KNOW
AND HER VOICE IS THE SAME AS THE ONE WE IMAGINED!
!
DAMN IT!
SO I SAY WE FOLLOW HAJIME.

BUT IF WE MADE HER UP, THEN HOW COULD SHE KNOW SOMETHING THAT WE DON'T KNOW?
OKAY, I KNOW NOW.
HAJIME ..... , IS SOMEONE WE MADE UP, AND SHE EXISTS AS A MIRAGE.
SFX: ZURU


DAMN IT!
THERE'S NO WAY HAJIME WOULD KNOW THE REAL EXIT.


.....
SFX. ZU ZU.



SFX: GUH

SFX: GUHIH GUHH

I THOUGHT IT WAS YOU ATSUO
IS THAT YOU KOUHEI?
Hehehe.
IT'S.....HAJIME!?
BUT .... AREN'T YOU JUST A MIRAGE?
Yeah!
ARE YOU REALLY HAJIME?

If I leave you two here, what kind of a woman would I be!?
You two are my closest friends.
I'm someone you guys made up.
Yeah.

HAJIME'S JUST A MIRAGE.
A MIRAGE PULLING US BY OUR HANDS?
JUST A BIT MORE!
Gee?
It's the exit.

WHY WOULD HAJIME KNOW ABOUT AN EXIT WE DIDN'T?
ALL QUESTIONS WERE BRUSHED ASIDE.
WE'RE ..... WE'RE SAVED.

AND THAT'S WHEN WE FIRST MET HAJIME.

A HALLUCINATION...!! OR REALITY...?!
POP
JUST LIKE THAT, OUR IMAGINARY FRIEND APPEARED BEFORE US.
HAJIME STOOD THERE, REAL AS CAN BE.
はじめ〈前編〉

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BECAUSE THE BOOK IS ALWAYS BETTER.

AND ALSO, *HAJIME*.

THAT'S US. KAN KOUHEI, KIZUNO ATSUO...

EVERYDAY IS WITHOUT SURPRISES...!?

AFTER WE MADE UP DIFFERENT THINGS ABOUT HER, *HAJIME* (EVEN THOUGH SHE'S ONLY A FIGMENT OF OUR IMAGINATION) APPEARED BEFORE US.

HAJIME IS IMAGINARY. SHE WAS CREATED BY ATSUO TO PROTECT MY LIE.

SPECIAL SERIES SECOND CHAPTER -31 P

HAJIME 〈後編〉

AN IMAGINARY FRIEND.

FOR SOME REASON, ONLY THE TWO OF US CAN FEEL HER PRESENCE.

An Ahatsuki-manga release editor: dsy22 translator: silent_violin

ATSUO SAID SOMETHING ABOUT THIS BEFORE. HE SAID THAT "WE'RE USING AN IDENTICAL AMOUNT OF LARGE CONCENTRATION TO SEE IMAGINARY OBJECTS".

THIS IS KNOWN AS MIND OVER MATTER.

PRESSING AN UNLIGHTED CIGARETTE ON THE HAND AND GETTING A BURN. IF HYPNOSIS CAN MAKE YOU BELIEVE THAT THE CIGARETTE IS LIGHTED, THEN THE BURN IS POSSIBLE.

HERE IS AN EXAM-PLE.

WHAT'S EVEN MORE AMAZING IS THAT HAJIME'S LIFE IS EXACTLY THE SAME AS WHAT WE HAD MADE IT UP TO BE.

TO ADD TO THAT, IT ALSO SEEMS THAT SHE A FAST LEARNER. SHE'S EVEN SMARTER THAN ATSUO. SHE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE COMPLETELY IMAGINARY. SHE'S REALLY A STRANGE PERSON.

WEARING A UNIFORM THAT LOOKS LIKE THAT OF THE MIDDLE SCHOOL NEARBY. SHE EVEN SHOWED US HER STUDENT ID EVEN THOUGH SHE DOESN'T GO TO SCHOOL.

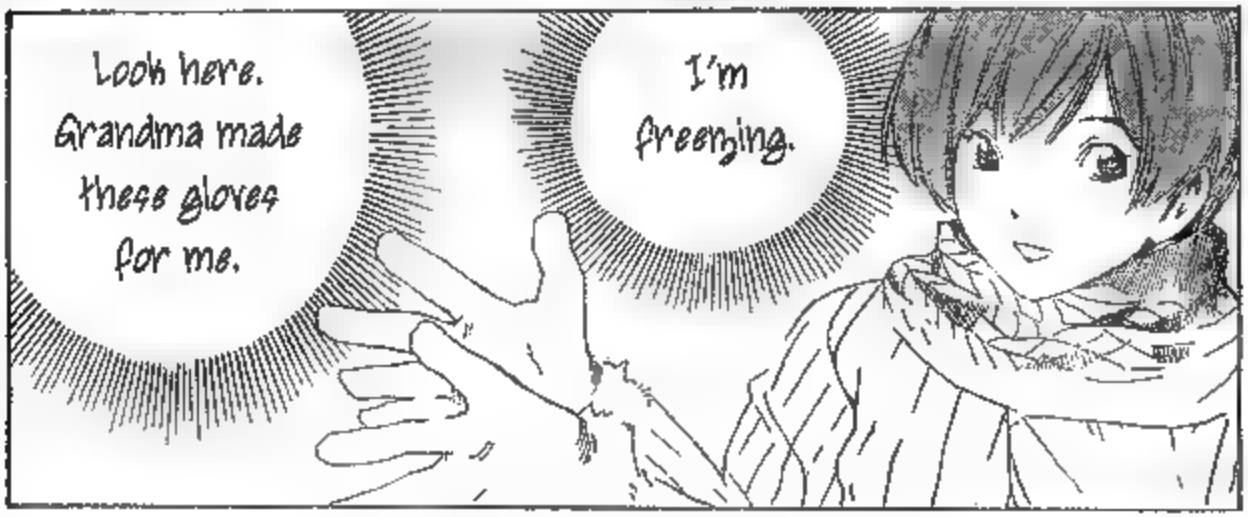
HAJIME IS STILL IMAGINARY.

HOWEVER, NO ONE ELSE CAN SEE HER.

Hey !!
Atsuo !!
Kouhei !!
A HALLUCINATION THAT LASTED FOR 3 YEARS....?!
HAJIME APPEARS BEFORE US EVERYDAY.
WE ARE ALREADY IN THE THIRD YEAR OF MIDDLE SCHOOL.
HAJIME
〈後編〉
原作：乙一 漫画：小畑健

Nah!! I'm so sorry!
HALLUCINATIONS CAN FEEL COLD?
Nah!! It's so cold out here.
The two of you were waiting for me?

HEY.
HAJIME.

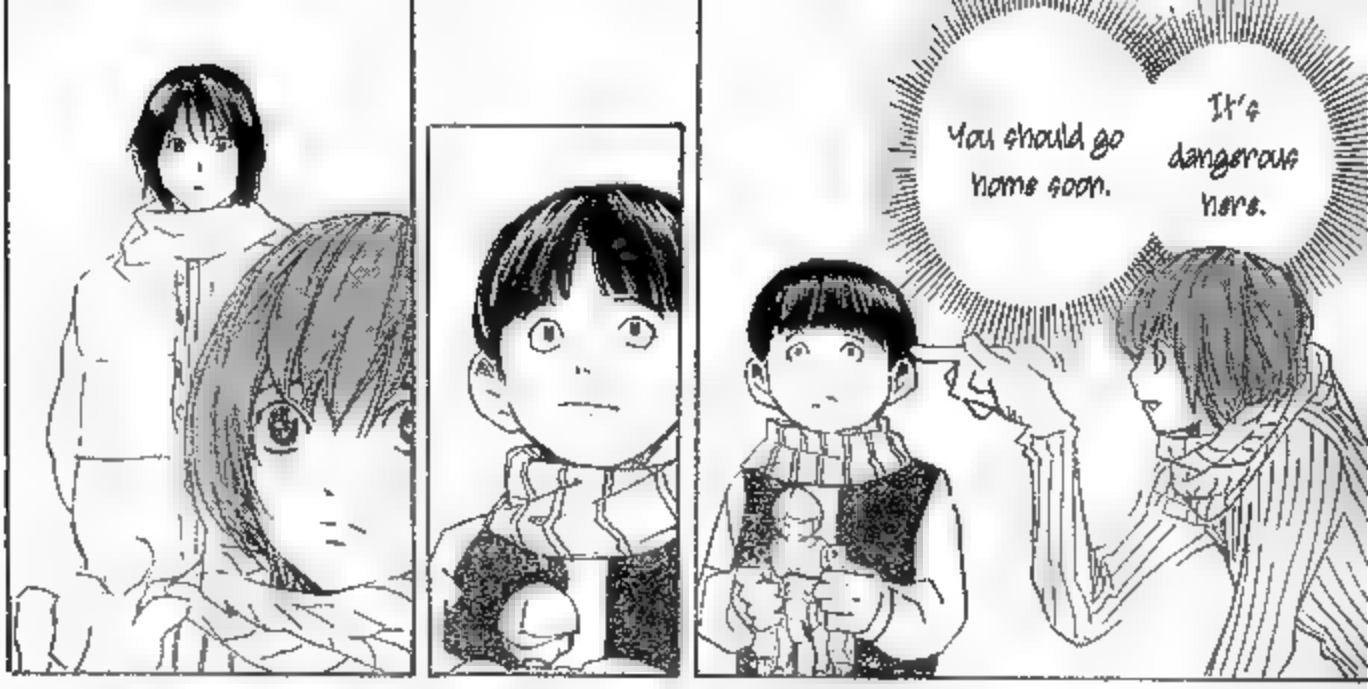

Look here. Grandma made these gloves for me.
I'm freezing.

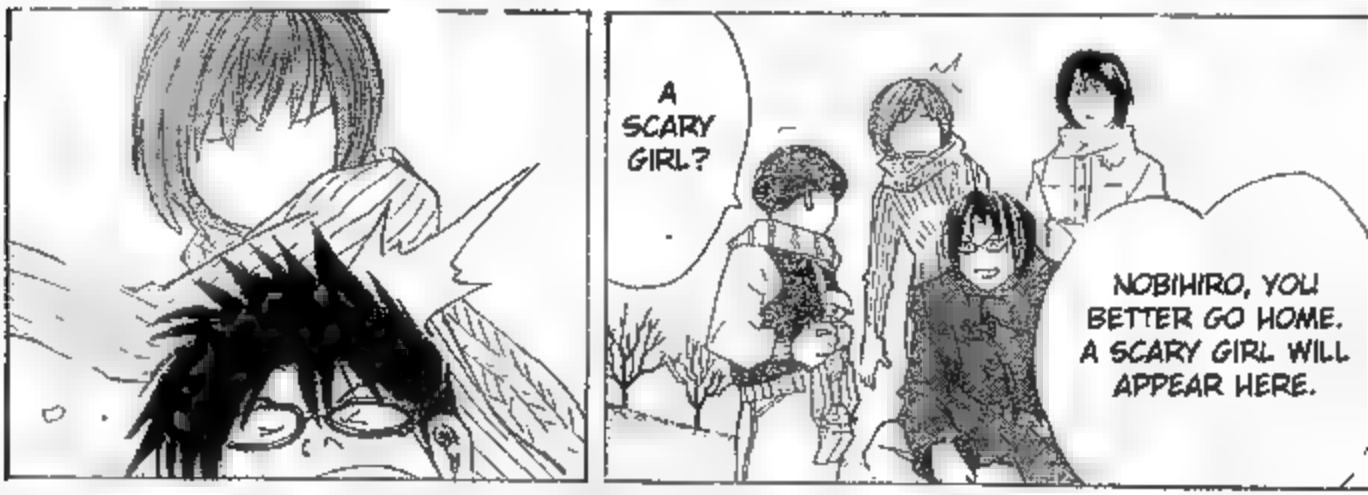
YUP!
IS EVERYTHING READY?

I'm so excited! This is my first time going there.
We're going to Kouhei's house today.
.....

HOW'S YOUR GRANDMA DOING?
She's doing fine.

Ah!
Hey! It's dangerous over there!
WHAT'S GOING ON?
HE'S THE BRAT THAT LIVES NEXT DOOR TO KOUHEI. HE'S VERY STUBBORN.
HEY, ISN'T THAT NOBIHIRO?
You know him?
HE PROBABLY CAN'T HEAR YOU.
HAHA! HIDDEN TREASURES ....
THERE MIGHT BE HIDDEN TREASURES INSIDE.
I FOUND A COOL PLACE.
IT'S THE PERFECT PLACE FOR A SECRET BASE.


You should go home soon.
It's dangerous here.


A SCARY GIRL?
NOBIHIRO, YOU BETTER GO HOME. A SCARY GIRL WILL APPEAR HERE.

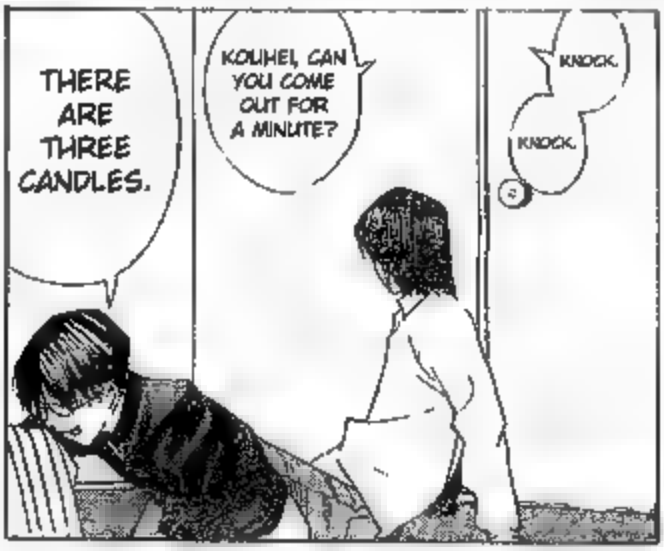
?
?
NOW NOW THAT'S ENOUGH.
YOU'RE VERY VIOLENT TO US.
I'm not scary at all!

Huh? What're you two doing for me?
WE GOT SOMETHING TO DO FOR YOU TODAY...

HAJIME SEEMED TO HAVE A LONELY EXPRESSION ON HER FACE.
JUST THEN,
Huh?
YEAH.
It's my birthday?
IT HAS NEVER BEEN CELEBRATED BEFORE.
WE WANTED IT TO BE OUR LAST MEMORY OF MIDDLE SCHOOL.
RIGHT, KOUHEI?
Wah! I'm so happy!!
Thanks, Ateuo and Kouhei!

You guys remembered about it.
OF COURSE. WE WERE THE ONES WHO SET THE DATE.
GREAT. HAJIME IS STILL THE SAME AS BEFORE.

WHAT'S GOING ON?
IT WAS NOISY IN THERE.
AREN'T YOU STUDYING WITH ATSUO?


KOUHEI, CAN YOU COME OUT FOR A MINUTE?
KNOCK.
KNOCK.
THERE ARE THREE CANDLES.

HUH?
DO YOU KNOW HER ?
YOU TWO MENTIONED HAJIME EARLIER.

ISN'T SHE THE TEENAGER WHO STEALS THINGS, STAYS OUT LATE, AND KEEPS DOING BAD THINGS?
SHE EVEN PICKS ON KIDS. MRS. ISHIBOSHI FROM NEXT DOOR SAID THIS AND WOULDN'T EVEN LET NOBIHIRO GO OUT TO PLAY ALONE....
DON'T BECOME INVOLVED WITH SUCH A BAD TEEN.

HAJIME ISN'T THAT KIND OF A PERSON! THOSE ARE ONLY RUMORS!
SHE'S MY FRIEND.
.....
SHE'S MY FRIEND.
HUH?

I JUST THOUGHT OF IT NOW.
EVER SINCE THAT TIME, HAJIME STARTED TO APPEAR BEFORE US EVERYDAY.
WHY DOES SHE KEEP ON APPEARING BEFORE US?
—
WEIRD.

I'M SORRY ABOUT THAT. YOUR BIRTHDAY WAS RUINED BECAUSE OF IT.
Haha. It's all right.

I'LL WALK YOU TO THE BUS STOP.

BYE.
LATER.

I can't eat this world's cake anyway.

Hehe ...!!
I EVEN ATE YOUR PORTION OF THE CAKE. SORRY ABOUT THAT TOO.

...eat the strawberry cake Kouhei picked for me, I'll be happy
When I can...
Atsuo said that you were the one who picked the strawberry cake.
YUP.
AH? WAIT...
CAKE....
SORRY! I COMPLETELY FORGOT!
I'M SUCH AN IDIOT.... I'M THE ONE WHO MADE UP THAT TOO....
IT'S NOT STRAWBERRY CAKE!
HAJIME'S FAVORITE TYPE IS CHOCOLATE CAKE!
NEXT YEAR, WE WILL DEFINITELY BUY A CHOCOLATE CAKE FOR YOU!

HUH?
I'm still only imaginary.

I also want to dream the things you guys dream of.
For example, how does you guys' I can't touch anything in your world.
I also have my own life, taste, and I want to go to High School as well.
WHAT? WHAT ARE YOU SAYING, MAJIME?

Being with you guys make me feel that I, myself, am imaginary.
But why do I keep on hanging out with you guys?

I knew from the start that
...we live on different worlds!

SOMETIME IN THE FUTURE, MAYBE YOU CAN COME INTO OUR WORLD....
.....
.....
YOU'RE NOT COMING IN?
AH! OH YEAH.
Thank you for saying that I'm your friend.
Good luck on your test.
On Kaino, I'm grateful for earlier.
BUS SFX: BORORO

#17
THIS IS THE FIRST TIME THIS HAPPENED.
EVER SINCE THAT MOMENT, HAJIME STOPPED APPEARING.

SFX: RAINING

I WONDER WHAT HAPPENED. HAJIME...
.....

DID HAJIME SAY ANYTHING ABOUT THIS?

WHY?! SHE WOULDN'T DISAPPEAR FOR NO REASON!
PERHAPS SHE ALREADY DISAPPEARED .....

EVEN THOUGH SHE'S IMAGINARY, SHE IS STILL OUR FRIEND!
NO SHE'S NOT!!

EVEN THOUGH SHE IS A FRIEND, SHE'S STILL ONLY IMAGINARY.
SUDDENLY APPEARING AND SUDDENLY DISAPPEARING. IT'S NOT THAT STRANGE. I DON'T MIND IT THAT MUCH.

QUIET PLEASE !!
.....
There's a storm warning for Mitoubu prefecture.
NOBI?
I'M HOME
KOUHEI !! DID YOU SEE NOBIHIRO?
This storm will continue to rain from late tonigh t till early morning tomorrow. The storm continues to get worse
WHAT IS GOING ON WITH NOBI?
HE DISAPPEARED AROUND NOON. MRS. ISHIBOSHI IS SEARCHING FOR HIM

BE CAREFUL.
I'LL GO LOOK FOR HIM TOO.
EVEN THE POLICE CAME. I HOPE NOBIHIRO IS ALL RIGHT. I'M STARTING TO GET WORRIED...

HE COULDN'T HAVE FALLEN IN.... COULD HE?
WHEN IT RAINS HARD, THE WATER LEVEL ON THE RIVER RISES UP QUICKLY.

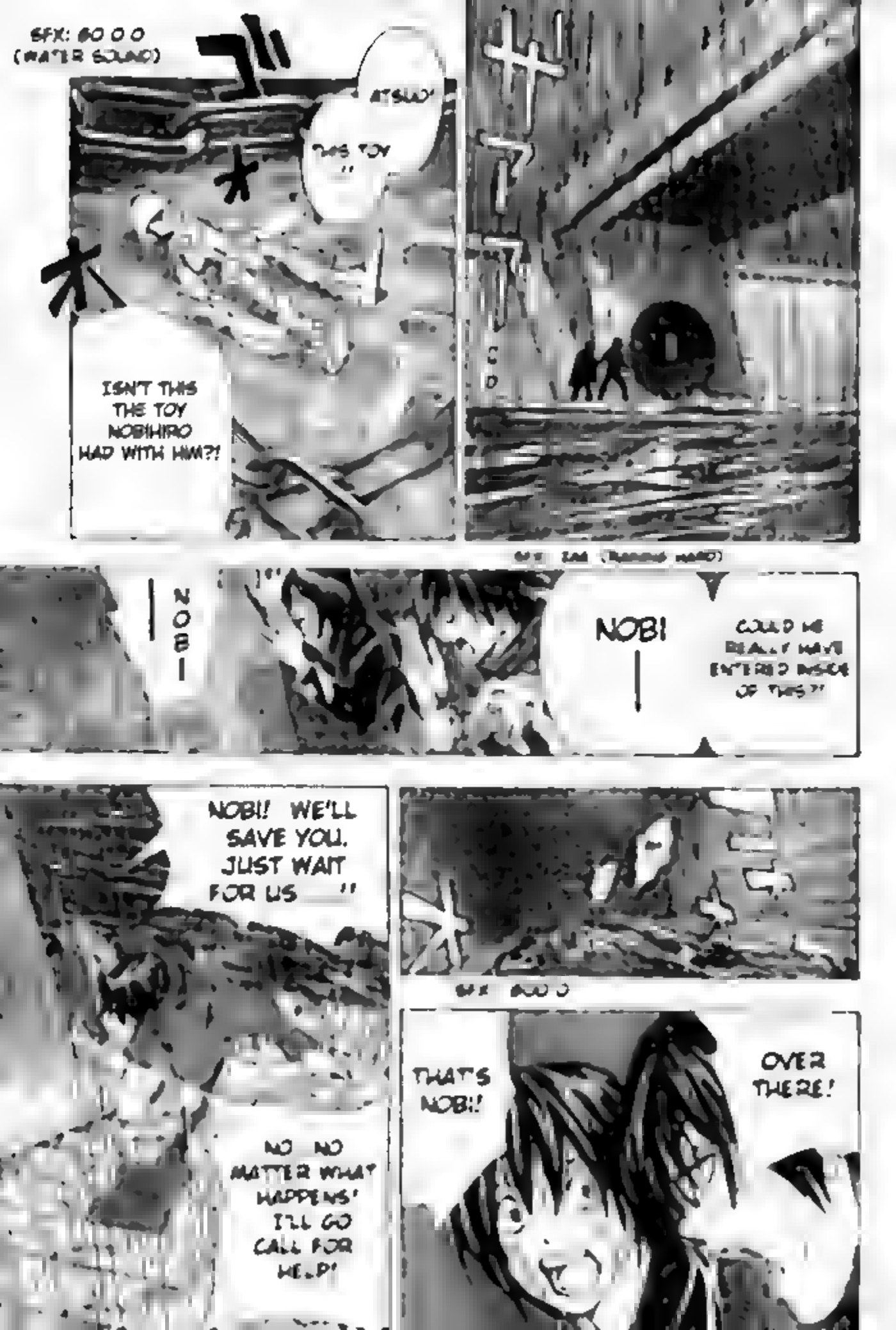
NOBI
AH! NOBIHIRO

I HEARD THAT NOBIHIRO DIS-APPEARED. IS IT TRUE?
ATSUO!

ザー

THE ENTRANCE TO THE UNDERGROUND WATER WAY !!

!


SFX: GOOO (WATER SOUND)
AT SEA!
THIS TOY "
ISN'T THIS THE TOY NOBIHIRO HAD WITH HIM?!
SFX: ZAA (RAINING HARD)
NOBI
NOBI
COULD HE REALLY HAVE ENTERED INSIDE OF THIS?"
NOBI! WE'LL SAVE YOU. JUST WAIT FOR US "
NO NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS! I'LL GO CALL FOR HELP!
SFX: GOOO
THAT'S NOBI!
OVER THERE!

THE WATER CURRENT IS GETTING STRONGER AND STRONGER.
ゴォォ
SFX WATER SPLASHING
ONE PERSON ISN'T ENOUGH
I HAVEN'T BEEN HERE SINCE THAT TIME
IF THIS CONTINUES, HE'LL BE PUSHED INWARD.
crink
DURING TIMES LIKE THIS, IF ONLY NAJIMI WAS HERE
SFX FLOWING WATER
NOBI
I'M COMING !!

AT THAT TIME, THERE WAS A LARGE POND AT THE LOWEST LEVEL.
NOBI
SFX FLOWING WATER
NOBI
!
KOUHEI NI-SAN
!
!
THERE WAS NO LIGHT AT ALL. IT WAS AS LONELY AS IF IT WAS THE END OF THE WORLD
ALL IS LOST IF HE GOT PUSHED INSIDE THAT PLACE.
SFX DO DO DO
!
IT'S ALL RIGHT NOW. COME OVER HERE QUICKLY.

SFX DOBAAH
NAJIMI.....
DAMN IT! IF THIS KEEPS UP WE'LL GET DRAGGED INTO THAT UNDERGROUND PLACE
WHEN WE BLAMED THE BAD THINGS ON HER, SHE APPEARED. YEAH, SHE WAS THE ONE WHO SAVED US AT THAT TIME....
NAJIMI? WHO IS SHE....

I'M BY YOUR SIDE.

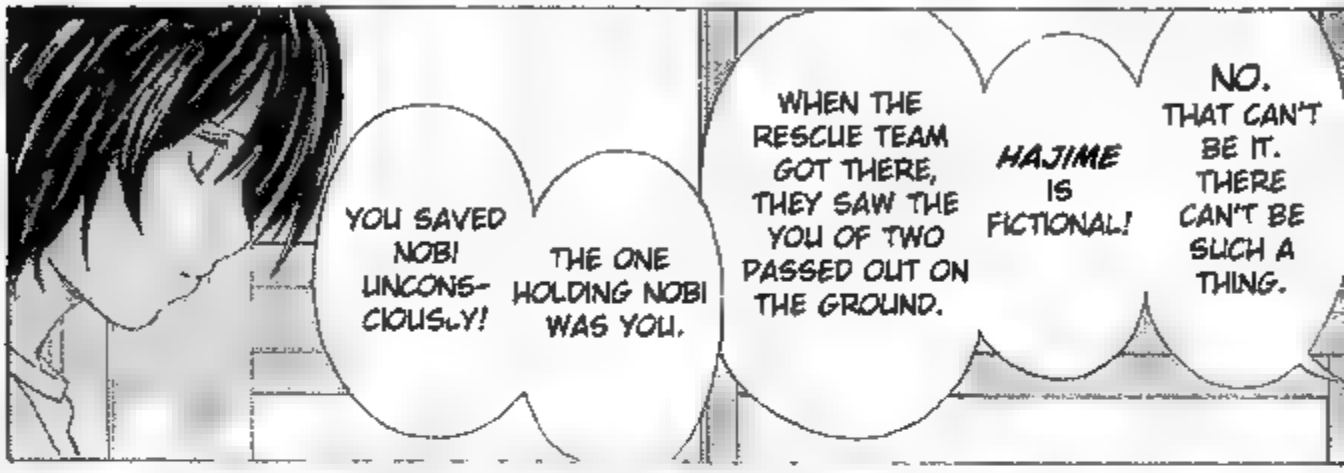
SAAH
SFX DOH

NAJIME
.....

SFX: OH OH OH

YOU WERE AMAZING. YOU SAVED NOBUHIRO.
NOBUHIRO IS ALL RIGHT NOW.
HE'S SLEEPING IN THE NEXT ROOM. YOU CAN VISIT HIM LATER.
.....
IT WAS MAJIME WHO HELD NOBI TIGHTLY AGAINST HER.
EVEN THOUGH IT'S IMPOSSIBLE, BUT I REALLY SAW WHAT HAPPENED.
I WASN'T THE ONE WHO SAVED NOBUHIRO.

IT'S NOT POSSIBLE.
UNLESS THAT UNDERGROUND WATER WAY IS THE INTERFACE BETWEEN OUR WORLD AND HAJIME'S WORLD.
.....


NO. THAT CAN'T BE IT. THERE CAN'T BE SUCH A THING.
HAJIME IS FICTIONAL!
WHEN THE RESCUE TEAM GOT THERE, THEY SAW THE YOU OF TWO PASSED OUT ON THE GROUND.
THE ONE HOLDING NOBI WAS YOU.
YOU SAVED NOBI UNCONSCIOUSLY!

LOOK. IT SAYS HERE THAT FIVE PEOPLE DIED ON THE SCREEN.
5 PEOPLE? WASN'T IT 6 PEOPLE...?

OH!
I DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT THIS. FIVE PEOPLE DIED....
We are re announcing the victims who died in last night a storm

WHAT?

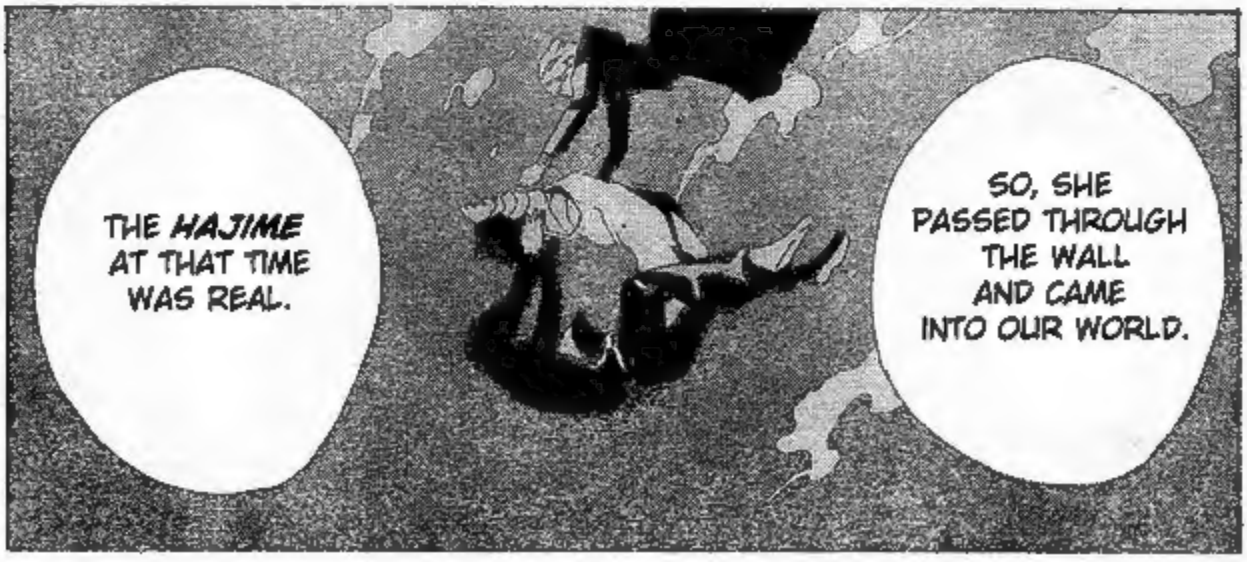
Death Toll: 6 people

EVER SINCE THAT TIME, WE HAVE NOT SEEN *HAJIME*.

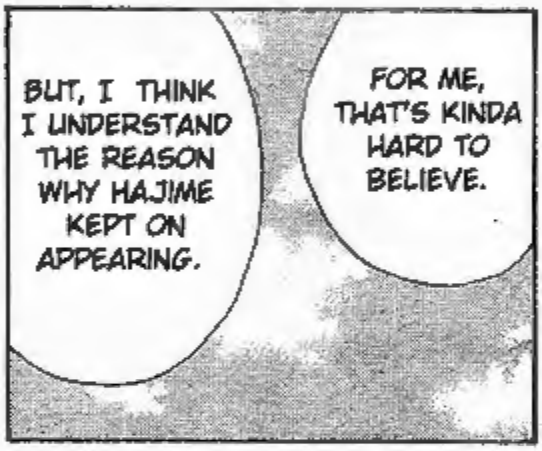
WE WERE THE ONLY ONES WHO SAW THE SIXTH DEAD CASUALTY.
THAT WAS PROBABLY *HAJIME*.

IT COULD BE THAT SHE WAS ABLE TO COME INTO OUR WORLD AT THAT TIME.

HAJIME WASN'T A MIRAGE AT THAT TIME?


THE *HAJIME* AT THAT TIME WAS REAL.
SO, SHE PASSED THROUGH THE WALL AND CAME INTO OUR WORLD.

HAJIME CAME INTO THIS WORLD!

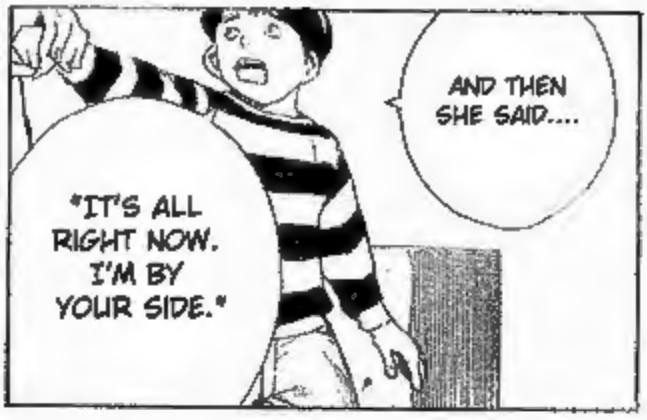

BUT, I THINK I UNDERSTAND THE REASON WHY HAJIME KEPT ON APPEARING.
FOR ME, THAT'S KINDA HARD TO BELIEVE.

.....

IT MUST BE BECAUSE OF YOU....

DON'T MAKE THINGS UP, NOBIHIRO!
IT'S TRUE!! IT'S REALLY TRUE!

IT WAS A GIRL!
BUT THERE WAS ONE ANOTHER PERSON!
BUT....
THE ONE WHO SAVED YOU AT THAT TIME WAS KOUHEI, RIGHT?
IT WAS KOUHEI AND THAT GIRL WHO PULLED ME UP FROM THE WATER !!
IT WAS VERY WARM.
AND THEN, THAT GIRL SAT BY MY SIDE.
I ASKED HER WHO SHE WAS.
SHE SMILED AND ANSWERED,
"I'M THE SCARY GIRL."
"I'M HAJIME."



THAT WAS THE TRUTH .....

HAJIME CAME. SHE REALLY CAME INTO OUR WORLD!